

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 05519 01 OF 02 270645Z

12

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 086212

P 270455Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4152

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 5519

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MPOS, PFOR, VS

SUBJECT: LONG LE CHAN: LETTER FROM PRESIDENT THIEU TO CHIEFS OF
GOVERNMENT AND HEADS OF STATE

1. MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS APRIL 26 GAVE AMBASSADOR TEXT OF
LETTER WHICH PRESIDENT THIEU IS SENDING TO SELECTED CHIEFS OF
STATE AND HEADS OF GOVERNMENT ON THE NEW SITUATION FOLLOWING THE
COMMUNIST SEIZURE OF TONG LE CHAN APRIL 11. LIST OF
COUNTRIES TO WHICH LETTER BEING SENT IS IN PARA 3 BELOW. TEXT
OF LETTER FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN TEXT

EXCELLENCY,

KNOWING YOUR CONSTANT DEVOTION TO THE CAUSE OF PEACE,
I DEEM IT APPROPRIATE TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE GRAVE THREAT
TO PEACE CAUSED BY RECENT ACTIONS OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COM-
MUNIST TROOPS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM, AND TO THE MEASURES I HAVE
TAKEN IN ORDER TO REMEDY THAT SITUATION AND PRESERVE THE PARIS
PEACE AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973.

ON 26TH FEBRUARY 1973, LESS THAN ONE MONTH AFTER THE
AGREEMENT ON ENDING THE WAR AND RESTORING PEACE IN VIET-NAM WAS
SIGNED IN PARIS, SEVERAL COMMUNIST REGIMENTS SUPPORTED BY
ARTILLERY AND ANTIAIRCRAFT UNITS BEGAN ENCIRCLING AND ATTACKING THE
BASE OF TONG LE CHAN, A POSITION CONTINUOUSLY HELD BY THE
ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM FOR THE PAST SEVERAL
YEARS. THESE ATTACKS ON AND SIEGE OF TONG LE CHAN CLEARLY
CONSTITUTED GROSS VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT WHICH
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 05519 01 OF 02 270645Z

EXPRESSLY PROVIDES FOR A CEASEFIRE-IN-PLACE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM HAS VIGOROUSLY DENOUNCED THESE COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS) AND TO THE PARTIES TO THE PARIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIET-NAM. LARGE SEGMENTS OF PUBLIC OPINION IN VIET-NAM AND ABROAD HAVE ALSO STRONGLY CONDEMNED THESE COMMUNIST ACTS OF AGGRESSION.

HOWEVER THE COMMUNIST SIDE CHOSE TO IGNORE THE PROTEST OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AS WELL AS THE INDIGNATION IN PUBLIC OPINION. THEY CONTINUED ATTACKING AND BESIEGING THE TONG LE CHAN BASE. UP TO 12TH APRIL 1974, THE SIEGE OF TONG LE CHAN HAD LASTED A TOTAL OF 411 DAYS, DURING WHICH A GARRISON OF 250 MEN HAD TO SUSTAIN 37 FRONTAL ATTACKS, 29 INFILTRATIONS AND HARASSMENTS BY ENEMY SAPPERS AND 672 ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENTS TOTALLING MORE THAN 36,000 SHELLS OF VARIOUS CALIBERS.

THEN, IN THE NIGHT OF 11TH APRIL 1974, THE COMMUNISTS MUSTERED THEIR FULL STRENGTH TO LAUNCH A FINAL ASSAULT. THEY BOMBARDED THE BASE WITH OVER 900 ARTILLERY SHELLS THEN OVERRAN IT WITH MORE THAN 3,000 TROOPS.

THUS, IN UTTER CONTEMPT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973 WHICH ORDERED A CEASEFIRE-IN-PLACE AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF 13TH JUNE 1973 WHICH REAFFIRMED THAT CEASEFIRE, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE NOT HESITATED TO DEPLOY IMPORTANT UNITS AND USE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF WAR MATERIAL TO CAPTURE A BASE UNQUESTIONABLY HELD BY THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM FOR MANY YEARS, AS WELL AS THE WIDE AREA PLACED UNDER THE CONTROL OF THIS BASE.

THE SEIZURE OF THE TONG LE CHAN BASE NOT ONLY CONTRADICTS - &4-;3 ;89)-589, 9* 5#3 :3- 3*843 -&433.3,5, BUT IT ALSO REPRESENTS A DANGEROUS ESCALATION OF THE HOYE)8583 , SINCE BY CAPTURING TONG LE CHAN THE COMMUNISTS HAVE PIERCED THE NORTH WEST LINE OF DEFENCE OF SAIGON AND THUS DIRECTLY THREATENED THE CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF GONG LE CHAN ARE NOT ISOLATED INCIDENTS. ON THE CONTRARY, THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A PARTING COMMUNIST PLAN TO SABOTAGE SYSTEMATICALLY

AND DELIBERATELY THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973. IN FACT, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE COMMITTED THUS FAR MORE THAN 43,000 VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF WHICH BEING THE CAPTURE OF THE BASES OF LE MINH, BU BMKGK, BU PRANG, KHIEM HANH, BACH MA, THE TOWN OF KIEN DUC AND THE SIEGE OF DUC HUE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 05519 01 OF 02 270645Z

DISTRICT TOWN. THEY HAVE ALSO ILLEGALLY INTRODUCED INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM MORE THAN 100,000 ADDITIONAL TROOPS AND THOUSANDS OF TANKS, ARMORED VEHICLES AND PIECES OF HEAVY ARTILLERY SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND IN FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE PROVISIONS THEREOF. THEY HAVE REPAIRED AND BUILT 12 MILITARY AIRFIELDS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND OPENED NEW CORRIDORS OF INFILTRATION IN PREPARATION FOR A GENERAL MILITARY OFFENSIVE, AGAIN IN COMPLETE DISREGARD OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. THEY HAVE HAMPERED THE

ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION (ICCS) AND REFUSED TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR SHARE TO THE OPERATING BUDGET OF THIS BODY. THEY HAVE MULTIPLIED ACTS OF TERRORISM DIRECTED AT THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, THE MOST HEINOUS OF WHICH WAS THE SHELLING OF THE CAI LAY PRIMARY SCHOOL ON 9TH MARCH 1974, WHICH CAUSED DEATH AND INJURY TO NEARLY 100 SCHOOL CHILDREN. MEANWHILE, AT THE LA CELLE SAINT CLOUD CONFERENCE, THE COMMUNIST SIDE REFUSED EVEN TO CONSIDER THE MANY CONCRETE AND CONSTRUCTIVE PROPOSALS PUT FORTH BY THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM WITH A VIEW TO CARRYING OUT THE PROVISIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT WHICH DEAL WITH THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.

IN THE FACE OF THIS SERIES OF BLATANT VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973, OF WHICH THE CAPTURE OF THE TONG LE CHAN BASE WAS ONLY THE LATEST EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM CANNOT REMAIN PASSIVE OR BE CONTENT WITH SOME PERFUNCTORY VERBAL PROTESTS. WE CANNOT GO ON HOLDING FRUITLESS POLITICAL TALKS WITH THE COMMUNIST SIDE AT THE LA CELLE

SAINT CLOUD, AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT SHOW ANY EAGERNESS TO ARRIVE AT A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION AND ARE MERELY USING THESE TALKS AS A SMOKE-SCREEN TO COVER THEIR REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE. IF WE DID, WE WOULD CREATE IN WORLD OPINION A FALSE IMPRESSION OF NORMALCY AND SECURITY WHILE THE COMMUNISTS ARE ERODING THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THE PARIS PEACE AGREEMENT. THIS, I SURMISE, WOULD BE INDEED A DISSERVICE TO THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

THEREFORE, I HAVE INSTRUCTED THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AT THE LA CELLE SAINT CLOUD CONFERENCE TO SUSPEND ITS PARTICIPATION UNTIL THE COMMUNISTS HAVE PROVED THEIR GOODWILL FOR

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 05519 02 OF 02 271342Z

40

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 088718

P 270455Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4153

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 05519

EXDIS

PEACE THROUGH CONCRETE ACTIONS.

THIS DECISION OF MY GOVERNMENT WAS BY NO MEANS AIMED AT
DOWNGRADING THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973.

IT WAS MEANT INSTEAD TO ENSURE THAT THIS AGREEMENT BE
SCRUPULOUSLY RESPECTED AND SERIOUSLY IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTIES
CONCERNED, AND NOT ONLY BY OUR SIDE ALONE. IN FACT, WE CANNOT ALLOW
THE COMMUNIST SIDE TO CONTINUE TO MAKE A MOCKERY OF THIS AGREEMENT
BY COMMITTING DAILY VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE, WHILE PRETENDING
THEY ARE IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT, MERELY BECAUSE THEY CONTINUE
TO ATTEND THE WEEKLY MEETINGS OF THE LA CELLE SAINT CLOUD CON-
FERENCE TO CARRY ON THEIR PROPAGANDA. WE CANNOT PERMIT THE
COMMUNIST SIDE TO RESORT TO THE USE OF FORCE, INSTEAD OF ENGAGING
IN SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS AS PRESCRIBED BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT, TO
SETTLE THE VIET-NAM PROBLEM. I STRONGLY THINK THAT ALL THE PEACE
LOVING GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLE IN THE WORLD MUST BRING PRESSURE
TO BEAR ON THE COMMUNISTS, SO AS TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE NECESSITY
TO STRIVE FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION THROUGH EARNEST NEGOTIATIONS WITH
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM AND NOT TO REVERT TO
WAR IN THE PURSUIT OF THEIR AIMS OF CONQUEST.

AS REGARDS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM,
I CAN ASSURE YOUR EXCELLENCY THAT THIS GOVERNMENT'S UNIQUE AIM
IS TO ACHIEVE PEACE THROUGH THE CORRECT APPLICATION OF THE PARIS
AGREEMENT OF 27TH JANUARY 1973. IMPERFECT AS IT IS, THIS AGREE-
MENT REPRESENTS YEARS OF DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSTITUTES A
GOOD BASIS TO WORK ON FOR A SATISFACTORY SETTLEMENT OF THE VIET-NAM
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 05519 02 OF 02 271342Z

PROBLEM. WE DO NOT WANT THIS BASIS TO BE DESTROYED BY THE PERFIDIOUS
ACTION OF THE COMMUNIST SIDE SINCE THIS COULD MEAN THE RESUMPTION
OF WAR ON LARGE SCALE AND MANY MORE DECADES OF SUFFERINGS FOR THE
VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. INDEED, PEACE AND STABILITY IN SOUTH EAST ASIA
AND IN THE WORLD COULD BE JEOPARDIZED IF THE COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS
OF THE CEASEFIRE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM ARE ALLOWED TO GO ON UNCHECKED.
FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE, WE MUST COMPEL THE COMMUNIST SIDE TO CEASE
HOSTILITIES AND START SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS.

THE DECISION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM
TO SUSPEND PARTICIPATION IN THE LE CELLE SAINT CLOUD CONFERENCE UNTIL
THE COMMUNISTS HAVE GIVEN CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THEIR GOODWILL FOR
PEACE HAD BEEN DICTATED BY SUCH CONSIDERATIONS.

I TRUST THAT, IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE AND IN THE INTEREST OF WORLD
PEACE, YOUR EXCELLENCY WILL USE YOUR GOVT'S WIDESPREAD INFLUENCE TO
IMPRESS UPON THE COMMUNIST SIDE THAT THEY MUST IMMEDIATELY PUT
AN END TO THEIR DAILY VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM,

RETURN THE AREAS AND THE BASES THEY HAVE ILLEGALLY CAPTURED SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, CEASE THE INFILTRATIONS OF TROOPS AND WAR MATERIAL FROM NORTH VIET-NAM INTO SOUTH VIET-NAM, WITHDRAW TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT ALREADY INFILTRATED IN VIOLATION OF THE GENEVA AGREEMENT OF 1954 AND THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF 1973, LIBERATE ALL PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIANS THEY STILL ILLEGALLY DETAIN, DESIST FROM ALL ACTS OF

TERRORISM AND START SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM, SO THAT THE PARIS AGREEMENT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED AND PEACE RESTORED IN SOUTH VIET-NAM.

PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.

NGUYEN VAN THIEU
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

3. THIS LETTER IS BEING SENT TO: ARGENTIA, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, BAHRAIN, BELGIUM, BOLIVIA, BOTSWANA, BRAZIL, BURMA, CANADA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CHAD, CHILE, REPUBLIC OF CHINA, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, CYPRUS, DENMARK, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, EL SALVADOR, ETHIOPIA, FIJI, FRANCE, GAMBIA, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 05519 02 OF 02 271342Z

GERMANY, GHANA, GREECE, GUATEMALA, HAITI, HONDURAS, ICELAND, INDIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, IRELAND, ISRAEL, ITALY, IVORY COAST, JAMAICA, JAPAN, JORDAN, KENYA, KOREA, KHMER REPUBLIC, KUWAIT, LAOS, LEBANON, LIBERIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALAGASY REPUBLIC, MALAWI, MALAYSIA, MEXICO, MONACO, MOROCCO, NETHERLANDS, NEW ZEALAND, NICARAGUA, NIGER, NIGERIA, NORWAY, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, PERU, PHILIPPINES, PORTUGAL, QATAR, RWANDA, SAN MARINO, SAUDI ARABIA, SIERRA LEONE, SINGAPORE, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, THAILAND, TOGO, TONGA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TUNISIA, TURKEY, UK, USA, URUGUAY, VATICAN, VENEZUELA, WESTERN SAMOA, ZAIRE, UPPER VOLTA.

4. WE WILL INFORM DEPT OF GVN'S PLANS FOR PUBLICITY WHEN THESE ARE KNOWN.
MARTIN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMISTICE, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SAIGON05519
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740100-1114
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974048/aaaaagsd.tel
Line Count: 266
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LONG LE CHAN: LETTER FROM PRESIDENT THIEU TO CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT AND HEADS OF STATE
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, VS, (LONG LE CHAN), (THIEU)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005